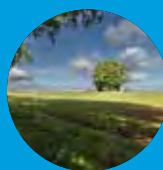


SC SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE



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JUNE/JULY 2022



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FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Words fail me, listening to the reports of our daily news diet. Everyday it is doom and gloom. War, economic crisis and untrustworthy leaders. As an Individual I can have no influence at all over any of the above named problems but I do just believe that we are incredibly lucky to live here in this part of Oxfordshire.

While valuing our surroundings, it just so happens that the people in this issue of the magazine remind me of the talents of so many of our community. From the amazing conservator plasterer Michael who shares his talents and skills with a younger generation who will continue with the wonderful restoration work; to Paul and Phil who set themselves challenges to raise money for charity; to Caroline who has spent 15 years working as a volunteer for FISH; to Cliff who valued the magazine sufficiently to write his memories for publication. He always hoped older residents would also share memories of Sonning Common as it was in the past.

Memories will be very much in our thoughts with the celebration of the life and 70 year rule of Queen Elizabeth, our longest serving monarch. A beacon will be lit on the Thursday 2 June at the Butchers Arms and on Friday 3 June there will be the tea party in the village Hall. Many residents are organizing their own street parties. The senior residents of the village were asked to write down their memories of 1952/3 and there are some fascinating snippets of oral history on page 20, that I hope will remind us of similar experiences.

The return of a successful OYB is a definite signal that life is returning to the old norm and as ever there are our regular contributors who amuse and inform us.

I hope you enjoy the read and for a few minutes are able to enjoy what is good about our lives. ●

Diana

Diana Pearman Editor

Email: editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org

MEET THE EDITORIAL TEAM



Diana Pearman



Christine Atkinson



Joan Grummant

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HEAD'S REPORT



As Easter has now passed, we do appear to be approaching a degree of normality in the running of the school. As I write Covid seems to have declined in both the staff and student body with a sudden rapidity across the spring break. Let us hope this now means we can get on with the day-to-day education of our community rather than CO2 monitoring, contrived one-way systems, social distancing, positives being negative, false positives, teachers being nurses, isolation rooms, face coverings and all the other paraphernalia and processes that have delineated the last two years. However, I hope I am not speaking too soon....!

On a much more optimistic note, we have received our first Ukrainian students into the school community in the last few days. What has been so incredibly pleasing has been the wonderful way in which the wider Sonning Common and MECE communities have rallied around to secure uniforms, friendship buddies, walk to school friends, tools for learning and other equipment needed to ensure these students have made a smooth start to their MECE careers. Similarly, the students have been impeccable in their positive approach to these students, realising the trauma and terror that has underscored their experiences over the last two months. As a school we pride ourselves on being a tolerant and supportive community and this has been borne out by our students' ability to empathise with their new school team members.

Our recent parent survey also reflected these positive community messages with our scores for how well the students have understood topics such as tolerance, respect, and understanding of each other all coming out at over 90%. We were also incredibly pleased to read figures such as 94% of the parental community saying they would recommend us to other parents, 93% of parents believed teaching was good or better and 94% said there was an appropriate amount of



challenge in our lessons. In addition, 92% of our parents felt the leadership of the school was effective and over 90% felt communication with home was good.

Lastly, it is also a noteworthy term as we go into the GCSE exam season for the first time since 2019. Incredibly the last students to sit GCSEs are now just finishing their first year at university! We hope we have done everything we can to support the students - there have been after school revision blocks, Easter School (4 days of 4 hours of classes attended by about 75% of Year 11), core revision days and more. We hope that the students have also been able to revise and work hard at home in order to maximise their chances. Our fingers and toes are fully crossed, although like many headteachers I am aware that the last 2 years have been a rocky road and there are definite gaps for many students. We have used the National Tutoring Programme and 15% of our students have had 10 lessons of 1:1 Maths, English or Science to support some of the gaps we have identified. Nevertheless, GCSE results day on 25 August is still going to be an extremely nervous occasion!! ●

ANDY HARTLEY
Headteacher

HOSTING UKRAINE FAMILIES

We are all aware of the awful situation in Ukraine and the millions of displaced people trying to find safety. Kathy and her husband are hosting a family coming from Ukraine, who will have arrived by the time you are reading this, and joined a group of people from surrounding villages who are also hosting or supporting.

In order to help support the families, Kathy and friends held a sale of goods on her driveway on Saturday 7th May, with a cake sale and a raffle. A total of £2000 was raised, including a donation from an American company, and all the money will go towards buying items for

the guests and to help them in any way they can.

Kathy said "Little did I know that this would receive such an amazing response. It has blown me away. I had some wonderful donations of goods, toys and clothes that the lounge and garage were full! We had so much that my kind neighbours offered help and we used their driveway too. My husband has worked in the Ukraine for many years, and we have made very special friends there."

We will follow up with Kathy and the others in the next magazine ●



PRIMARY SCHOOL AHEAD OF THE GAME

by Christine Atkinson

Well it certainly feels like life has mostly returned to normal at the primary school. Children running around outside playing together, the summer fair is being held in June, and the PTA quiz returned in the middle of May. Spring feels like a new beginning for most of us.

The children have been enjoying many activities during the term including STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) week at the end of March. All the pupils enjoyed the fantastic investigations and experiments that happened throughout the week, and they had a lot of FUN!! A BIG thank you to Johnson Matthey who went into the school to run spectacular workshops. There have been Lego competitions, a visit to a local mosque, doughnut sale and lots of sport.

Sport is very important at the school with many different events that children

can take part in. There have recently been football tournaments and tennis competitions, and athletics. The Year 5 & 6 Sportshall Athletics Team were crowned County Champions.

There was also a world record attempt! Reception, Year 2 and Year 4 helped other schools across Oxfordshire to smash the previous world record for the most people playing musical bumps at the same time. They had great fun on the day and having helped break the record confirmed makes it even better. Over 6,000 children took part. ●



MILLENNIUM

The Millennium Green between Kennylands Road and Peppard Road is perhaps the least appreciated community asset that Sonning Common has. But is also among the most precious. To have a significant tract of open meadow fringed with trees within cycling or walking distance of every dwelling, open to anyone to saunter, sit, meditate, sing, push a pushchair or a wheelchair or slowly pedal a bike while taking in the sweet sounds, sights and smells of nature is a blessing given to very few settlements like ours.

The foresight and generosity of those wise souls who formed the Sonning Common Open Spaces Trust in order to secure the land - which undoubtedly

would have been turned over to housing without their intervention - should be honoured by us all. And we should also be mindful of the need to go on cherishing our Millennium Green and looking after it.

Having managed to extricate myself from the parish council a while back, and being deep down a glutton for punishment, I have now become chairman of the Millennium Green Trust. I have taken over from Sheila Walker, who has given many years of devoted service as chairman and without whom the Green would certainly not have thrived as it has. I would also like to pay tribute to the tireless work of Tony Chandler, who has given countless hours of his time (unpaid of course) to

the task of keeping it in order.

I would like to see more people aware of the Millennium Green and the unusual pleasures it has to offer. And I would also like to see more people involved in helping out - there are hedges to be cut, trees to be maintained, brambles to be cut, lavender plants to be cosseted and lots more besides. I would like to assemble an informal group of volunteers ready and willing to be called up every now and then (not often, I promise) to lend a hand.

If anyone is interested in joining such a group - or becoming a trustee, because we are a bit thin on the ground - please email me at tomfort3@gmail.com ●

CAROLINE, A VOLUNTEER FOR OVER 15 YEARS

by Christine Atkinson



Most people in the local area are aware of FISH and the work that we do in the community so we thought that it would be nice to introduce you to some of the people we have supporting us as volunteers.

Our first profile is Caroline Stockill who many people know as she has been with us for over 15 years.

Caroline trained as a nurse, qualifying as an SRN in 1971. She married John, an RAF officer, in 1972 and, as a forces' wife, she travelled around with him to postings in Northern Ireland at the height of the Troubles (a scary experience), Cyprus, Germany and various locations in the UK with their two children Mark and Clare. A shortage of nurses in Cyprus (they were usually required to be single or divorced) meant that newlywed Caroline was able to work at the new hospital in RAF Akrotiri and the Families Medical Centre in Limasol while they were there. In 1975 she retrained as a midwife; her abiding memory during that time was the delivery of triplets – and she can still remember their weights! She worked at the Townlands Maternity unit until it closed. From here she moved to Thamesfield Nursing Home where she rose to Deputy Matron before she retired. During this time, sadly, Caroline was widowed and brought up Mark and Clare, then teenagers, on her own.

Caroline has seen many changes during her time with FISH and still chuckles at the call she received requesting advice with Koi

Carp – possibly one of the only queries she hasn't been able to answer! She is a regular driver for our clients as well as working shifts in the office, delivering medication, supporting the FISH tea parties and helping out with the FISH home visiting service.

Caroline does so much for FISH and we really appreciate her. She likes to be busy and enjoys the people side of what we do. She enjoys driving, which is a good thing really as she has taken our clients to all the hospitals within a 25 mile radius and has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the best places to park.

We are always looking for new volunteers to join us and we offer flexible volunteering. Volunteers are able to choose which jobs attract them and the amount of time to commit, to fit in with work and family commitments.

It is lovely to meet different people and many of our clients have fabulous tales to tell about their lives – and when they were FISH volunteers! ●

Debbie Ashford
Trustee



AIMING FOR GOLD

To be honest, the last thing I expected was to enjoy my time at Youth Club. After all, this was a volunteering role to complete my Gold Duke of Edinburgh award, and I wasn't too excited. I have since been proved very wrong. What I have found, in my five months at Youth Club, is that it has been as important an opportunity for growth for me, as it is for the many children who attend each week. I asked some of them what they enjoy most about their time with us. "Making new friends from outside of school" was a popular one, as was, "there are always new activities and we get to try things we have never done before". It is a place that is

comfortable, familiar and supportive. But also fun, friendly and rewarding.

Jolene, who runs the club, was once herself a youth club participant. The club has been around for so long, it is truly an integral part of the community and heritage. Jolene and the team work hard to ensure that everyone is welcome and that there is always something new for the children to take part in. The skills and memories that the children learn are ones they can bring into adulthood, and who knows, maybe their children will have the opportunity to experience youth club as well! It is the atmosphere that the children create that has impressed me. They welcomed me

unconditionally, as they have others since I joined. There is a sense of belonging, but never at the expense of feeling exclusive.

If you have thought about sending your children to us, please do. There is no doubt that a child participating will benefit from increased critical thinking, problem solving, better leadership skills, encouraged to be as creative as possible and how to operate as a team. Sometimes, however, it is just about the enjoyment. The ability to tune out any responsibility and enjoy time making friends and having fun.

No wonder I enjoy it so much, and I have no doubt, your children will too. ●

Lauren Stokes

ON YOUR BIKE 2022



On Sunday 3rd April, On Your Bike returned for the first time since 2019 due to the corona virus pandemic. Although it was a chilly start to the day the sun shone and we were thrilled with the turnout, as about 380 people participated. It was really wonderful to see so many happy faces, some new to the ride and many who have supported it for years.

On Your Bike was first held in 2007, with the idea to create a local event the whole community could get involved in to explore the local countryside, have fun and promote the benefits of a healthy activity.

It is open to all ages and level of ability. It is a ride, not a race!

There is a choice of 3 distances, 20 miles going out via Ipsden and Nuffield, 12 miles via Stoke Row, and 6 miles via Gallowstree.

One hundred percent of all entry fees are

shared between Sonning Common Primary School PTA and chosen local charities (Green shoots in Peppard, and Sonning Common Community First Responders).

A total of over £2,850 was raised.

Riders taking part gathered in the school's playground, and those taking part in the 20 mile ride were started first in small groups.

We were so grateful to the twenty volunteer marshals that were along the 3 routes and the break area where cyclists could stop and have a drink.

Our PTA team did a sterling job of providing tea, coffee, hotdogs and bacon rolls, which also helped raise funds for the school.

AW Cycles were present in the playground to help with any last minute bike emergencies and to ensure they were road worthy, as well as Sonning Common Community first responders in case of

anyone in need of medical attention.

At Sonning Common Primary School we are always keen to encourage the children to be involved in the community and to find ways they enjoy to keep fit and healthy.

With thanks to our sponsors for their support for our event.

AW Cycles from Caversham who kindly donated a bike and voucher to be exchanged for a cycle helmet, Beville Estate Agency, Peppard Building supplies, Higgs Group (Printers), Henley Standard newspaper and Lift Communication.

It was a great team effort pulling it all together, with thanks to Geoff Davis, Caroline Conway, Penny Snowden, Carly Hunt, Richard Beville and Jason Appleby.

We are looking forward to planning next year and announcing the date. ●

Kathryn Fell Willis
Sonning Common OYB Committee



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Phil Sweetman

Parish news

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Four years ago, when work started on revising our Neighbourhood Plan (NP), Britain was still in the EU, no one had heard of Covid, and Ukraine was a country in eastern Europe of which we knew and cared little. How much has changed since then – but still the Neighbourhood Plan marches, or staggers, on.

But that too has changed. When the working party that I chair began grappling with the challenge of working out where new housing in Sonning Common should go, we were full of bright hopes. We would have small houses for young families on the current Johnson Matthey car park. We would have assisted living apartments for the elderly where the Kennylands Gymnastics is located. We would see part of the playing fields at Maiden Erlegh/Chiltern Edge developed with the kind of housing

the village needed.

Then Inspired Villages (IV) came on the scene, and some of those fine intentions collapsed in ruins. As everyone now surely knows, a planning inspector ruled last summer in his infinite wisdom that IV should be allowed to construct a 'retirement village' of 133 apartments on the big field across from Johnson Matthey in Blounts Court Road.

That was equivalent to taking a wrecking ball to our plan. But after the inspector's decision – and the gallant but unsuccessful attempt by South Oxfordshire District Council to challenge it by means of a judicial review – the NP working party had to try to do its best to salvage what it could from the wreckage. In the autumn we released a draft revision for consultation, and in December we submitted a new version of that revision to SODC. This document – which we know has its flaws, and in some

ways incomplete – is, as I write this, in the hands of a professional planner appointed to examine it and to decide if it is fit for purpose.

The challenge we now face is how we accommodate the IV retirement village within the plan, if we are able to do so. That is up to the examiner, and we do not know yet what view he will take. When we do know, the village will know.

What I would like to emphasise at this stage is that, despite the reverses and disappointments – which at times made me and others feel like throwing in the towel – I do believe that Sonning Common needs a revised Neighbourhood Plan. If and when the time comes, I will be urging the village to back it, despite all the frustrating things that have happened. ●

Tom Fort

MEMORIAL PARK PLAY AREA UPDATE

The construction of the play area at Memorial Park is now well underway. A French drain was installed as part of preliminary works to aid drainage on the site and the mound will soon be re-shaped to accommodate a slide, climbing net and sleeper steps.

Many of you will have seen the plans at the consultation event last year and it was great to have gathered residents' views to shape the facility. For those who missed the event, the play area also includes a round-a-bout, numerous swings, a large tractor climbing frame, somersault bars

and a very new piece of kit called a 'cliff rider' where children pole-vault from one platform to another in a leap of faith. One of the questions posed at the consultation event was whether the play area should be fenced or not. A majority of residents wished the play area to be enclosed, so we have ordered galvanised bow-top fencing for the perimeter with two pedestrian gates plus a maintenance access gate. The main surfacing chosen was 'wet-pour' which is a spongy rubberised surface, designed to soften any falls and meet the British Safety Standards.

The play area has been funded by Tarmac and we are also grateful to the Boshier Hinton Foundation who funded the accessible roundabout. Florence House Children's Home raised money for a colourful 'buddy bench' and SOHA are funding two picnic tables. We can't wait for the play area to be ready and realise it is tempting to 'have a go', but please wait until Memorial Park is open to venture in. We will require sign off from a RoSPA safety inspector before we can allow access to ensure it is ready for fun! ●

Becky Jenkins

Liza Foster
Foot Health Professional



I am a fully qualified, registered foot health professional. I provide a domiciliary service treating common foot problems such as nail cutting, ingrowing toe nails, corns, callus, fungal nail etc. Please contact if I can help 079 440 71882

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Sonning Common Magazine CIC needs a Chairman of Directors

After 11 years as chairman Geoff Adams intends to retire as Chairman of Sonning Common Magazine CIC. this summer. The chairman is responsible for ensuring the directors are able to run the magazine for the benefit of Sonning Common residents and those in the immediately surrounding area. It is published every other month. Board meetings are held approximately 5 times a year. The Chairman of a small Community Interest Company (CIC) has prime responsibility for ensuring that the board of directors meet the very limited statutory requirements for a CIC.

For further information or to submit an expression of interest for this worthwhile and enjoyable post please contact Geoff Adams chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org or phone 0118 972 2134.

There is no remuneration for the post.

50th ANNIVERSARY SAVE THE DATE

This will take place on Saturday 3rd September 2022 from 11 am to 3 pm.
Please put the date in your diaries. It will be a celebration not only of the 50th Anniversary but also the return to a new normal post Covid -19.

It will be a reunion of past and present employees as well as a community event for our patients to enjoy.

We will have activities for the young. There will be a display of the history and successes over the years. Groups such as Green Gym, Health Walks, Health Cycling, Functional Physio/Pilates and Active Leaders will be invited to have stalls to display information on healthy activities.

There will be refreshments available during the event.

If you used to work at Sonning Common Health Centre or know anyone who did and has left the area, please ask them to get in touch as we would love to invite them along.

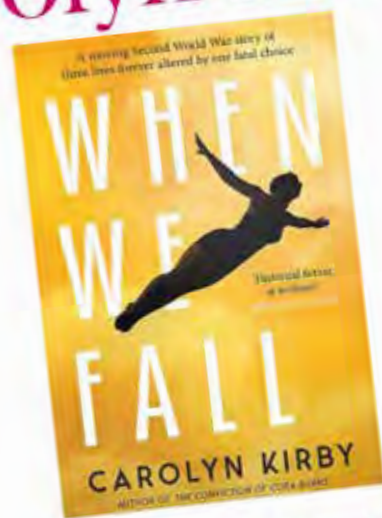
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Health Walks

There are no walk timetables in paper form at the moment, so please check the website for days/starting places/distances: www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk/timetable

Hopefully the mud will have all dried up by now, and we are blessed with fantastic countryside in the Chilterns – so what's your excuse? Get out and walk! Chris Brook 924 2515

LIBRARY AUTHOR EVENING PRESENTS A TALK BY Carolyn Kirby



Chosen by The Times and Sunday Times as one of the ten best historical novels of 2020

13th June 7.00pm at the Library
Tickets £5 from the Library, including a glass of wine
Organised by The Friends of Sonning Common Library

SUMMER FAIR
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THE FRIENDS OF SONNING COMMON LIBRARY PRESENT LEGO Master Builders



August 3rd 9:30am at the library
Tickets £5 in advance from the library
Organised by The Friends of Sonning Common Library

SONNING COMMON COFFEE MORNING

Sonning Common Village Hall
WEDNESDAY 1st JUNE
10.30 a.m. – 12 Noon

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SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

PROSTATE CANCER DR ADAM JONES CONSULTANT UROLOGIST

MR ADAM JONES IS A DEDICATED AND RENOWNED CONSULTANT UROLOGIST PRACTISING IN READING. HE SPECIALISES IN PROSTATE CANCER AND BIOPSIES, PSA (PROSTATE SPECIFIC ANTIGEN), KIDNEY CANCER, HOLEP, AND ROBOTIC AND LAPAROSCOPIC SURGERY.

MR ADAM JONES IS KINDLY GOING TO SHARE SOME OF HIS WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER. INFORMATION WILL INCLUDE: WHAT TO LOOK FOR, HOW TO GET HELP IF YOU FIND ANYTHING OF CONCERN, WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE.

TUESDAY 28TH JUNE 2022
6.00-7.15 PM

TO BE HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM



TO BOOK YOUR PLACE AND TO RECEIVE A LINK TO THE EVENT PLEASE EMAIL [SCHCpg@gmail.com](mailto:schcpg@gmail.com)

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ZooLab is coming to Sonning Common Library
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SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE



Staff news

Receptionist Kim, has left her role after 13 and a half years at the health centre. She is wished every success in the future and is thanked for her valued help and support.

Anna, Bronnie and Sharon are welcomed as new receptionists.

Practice Nurse Nikki joins the team and will be working Tuesday to Friday.

COVID Vaccination Update

Sonning Common Health Centre has offered the Spring Booster Vaccination which is for the 75+ and immunosuppressed patients who are due around 6 months after their Booster Vaccination. These took place in May. The Health Centre is continuing to also offer 1st, 2nd and Booster COVID vaccinations for those who are still due.

Sonning Common Health Centre patients have received a total 22394 doses of a COVID Vaccination either directly from the Practice or at a Mass Vaccination Site:

1st Vaccination = 7373 - 92% of our Adult population

2nd Vaccination = 7280 - 91% of our Adult population

Booster = 6633 - 83% of our Adult population

SCHC have administered a total of 15835 vaccinations:

1st Vaccination = 5884

2nd Vaccination = 5598

Booster = 4353

Travelling and eating out with a food allergy

1. Make sure allergy needs are communicated clearly if eating away from home.
2. Have some emergency food supplies.

3. Carry wet wipes/moist tissues that can be used to wipe down tray tables and other hard surfaces.

4. Check expiry dates of medication, replacing anything that will expire before or during travel.

5. Have medication easily accessible when travelling.

6. Carry Translation Cards that can be used to communicate food allergy in countries where English is not understood.

Translation Cards aim to make eating out at home and abroad less stressful.

Translation Cards are available from Allergy UK and will ensure others are made aware of your allergy despite any language barriers.

A set of three plastic cards per language are provided, each about the size of a credit card. The cards feature an allergy alert message, an emergency message and a message for use in restaurants to ensure that your food order is free from the particular allergen that causes your reaction.

The cards are printed in English on one side and the language of the country you are visiting on the reverse side.

Cards for over 70 different allergens are available in 35 languages:



Balinese, Bulgarian, Cambodian (Khmer), Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, Flemish, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian,

Indonesian, Japanese, Lao, Malay, Maltese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Slovene, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tamil, Thai, Turkish and Vietnamese.

A set of three cards cost £15 per language with a 15% discount on three sets of cards or more. Allow 2 weeks before travel.

How to Order

Please call helpline on 01322 619898 to discuss your exact requirements including allergens and language.

Healthy Activities in and around Sonning Common

The fourth edition has recently been published and is available from the Health Centre, Day Lewis pharmacy and the Library. There have been a few deletions due to Covid but also some new entries. Enjoy.



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**FOR HOMES OF
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MICHAEL O'REILLY

CONSERVATION PLASTERER – AN EXPERT IN OUR MIDST

By GEOFF ADAMS



Plaster used in pre second world war buildings is not the same as plaster used today. Michael is a nationally recognised expert in conservation plastering, that is the technique used to work with lime plaster sometimes combined with sand and small amounts of other substances, eg clay. This mix is used to repair the plaster on the interior and exterior walls of older buildings. Michael's expertise is such that, despite, or perhaps because of, being retired, he is in constant demand to lecture, demonstrate and run courses in the technique.

Lime plaster differs from modern plaster in that it is softer when set and absorbs moisture from the atmosphere and then releases it as the atmosphere dries. This makes it much more suitable for natural stone structures. It is often said to allow the wall to breathe.

Lime plaster is made by slaking (adding

water) to manufactured lime, (**not something to do at home**, as considerable heat is generated, up to 100C, and it can be explosive). The slaked product can then be mixed with sand, clay, animal hair or straw, depending on what it is to be used for. Lime mortar has been identified as in use as far back as 6500BC when it was used to bind floors in the Indus Valley, Syria and Jordan. A more modern use is in the construction of 'wattle and daub' buildings around 1000BC. When Portland cement came into use in the 19th century the use of lime mortar declined in new construction. Needless to say, there are a very large number of buildings in existence today where lime mortar and plaster was used in their construction and it is these that need the specialist conservation plasterer when it comes to repair or modification.

Michael started his work with lime plaster as a student at Hammersmith Building College in 1967 and subsequently set up business in

London until he moved to Sonning Common 20 years ago. Here he continued to work with specialist firms in the locality, renovating and repairing old buildings. Some of his work can be seen on the walls of Reading Abbey. During this period, he started instructing others



and was requested to demonstrate the technique both to professional plasterers and to DIY enthusiasts.

At his house Michael stores examples of the plasterer's craft, whether it is a stippled wall finish, decorative moulding or solid models.

In his workshop in Wood Lane Michael runs 4 or 5 day courses for plasterers who wish to acquire or expand their knowledge of the technique. I went along to a 'meet and greet' session run by Michael and his wife Cathy and met some of the students and other guests. It was quite an eye opener, as apart from the eight students, there were 4 or 5 local specialists whose businesses undertake the repairs, maintenance and, in some cases, construction of lime mortar-based structures. All the students were clearly delighted with what they had learnt and who they had met while with Michael. Who knew we had such a wealth of expertise in the area?

The students were on scholarships. One group, The Lethaby Scholars, funded through the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), were graduates in engineering or architecture with a few years of work experience. All had more than one degree as well as professional qualifications. Their scholarship period was nine months, during which they attended courses, lectures and visits throughout the UK, looking at the different skills needed in conservation work. The emphasis is to try out the techniques when coached by specialist craftsmen, so they can better appreciate the issues that need to be addressed when undertaking professional work in the future. Surely an excellent way of developing their expertise and for the sympathetic conservation of our built heritage. They are not allowed to undertake paid work while on the scholarship. Students on this course had come from Ireland, Scotland and England.

The other group had more of a craft-based background and were again funded by SPAB. This course is divided into three periods each of two months, allowing participants to return to work in between. Without exception the students were thrilled to be able to travel the country, see and try their hand at the different craft skills necessary and learn from the acknowledged experts such as Michael. For example, Daahir, a young man born in Somalia, brought up in Switzerland and now living with wife and 2-month-old daughter in Bristol has established a very successful business in conservation plastering. There is, he says, no shortage of work. Steve hails from Derbyshire and specializes in rope access work for conservation. His work includes high level inspections, identifying defects and carrying out repairs on castles, churches and cathedrals.

Michael is clearly a very highly regarded and effective practitioner and communicator in this specialised field. He has written a number of articles in



specialist magazines. In the one I read, he describes the repair of two ceilings in a manor house in South Moreton he makes the point that in today's environmentally conscious time not only did the repairs he undertook cost less than half the amount that would be charged by a builder, who wanted to remove all the old material dating from 16th century, but, because the original lath and plaster was retained, 900m of laths, 2000 nails and more than half a ton of haired lime plaster were kept out of land fill. ●

COMMEMORATING QUEEN ELIZABETH'S 70 YEAR REIGN

The Jubilee marks the accession of the Queen to the throne although the month chosen for the celebration is her Coronation.



"I was almost 11 at the time of the Coronation. We lived in a small village in Somerset. My parents were not well enough off to have a television set so my memory is going to the relatively wealthy farmer's house a little up the road and sitting round the 12 inch TV to see the ceremony in black and white with Richard Dimbleby's almost reverential commentary. I am sure there was a tea party in the village hall but I can't remember anything of it, except that all the children received a mug."

~ Geoff ~

"We were hard at work at Maths my worst subject, suddenly the bell rang and the whole school was summoned to the hall. What's happened we asked one another 'Are we back at war? Our Headmaster looked very solemn. What have we done wrong? I wondered. I have a very sombre duty, something awfully important happened today. Oh dear what can it be? Our dear King George 6th died this morning. Oh is that all, we said to one another. It did not mean anything to me. As far as the coronation was concerned there was a street party. It was a sit down tea with jelly, blancmange, sausage rolls and spam sandwiches."

~ Robbie ~

"I lived in North Kensington. At school we had a raffle to go to Westminster Abbey to see the coach procession. I was runner up and it rained all day. After the street party there was a dance on the Peabody Estate. During June I went to lots of parties."

~ Gloria ~

"My memory of the coronation was the 9 inch TV, my Dad was so proud as we were the only family who had one in our street. All the neighbours crowded in to watch the tiny screen. I saw the Queen riding in the carriage and everyone shouting 'there she is' and being surprised we could actually see her."

~ Daphne ~

"I worked at Oxford Mail newspaper and arranged the photos of the day."

~ Lenard ~

"We had 12 in our house to watch the TV. Tiny screen in a huge cabinet."

~ Lilian ~

"A street party with bunting and home-made hats."

~ Barbara ~

"My sister was in the fancy dress parade at school. She was dressed in white as Boudicca and her helmet was made from papier mache, baked hard in the oven. My sister still has her commemoration mug - we all had one."

~ Jan ~

"We went to Grandma's in Manchester and watched it on TV. Despite black and white the richness of the occasion came through. The sacred anointing under the special canvas to hide it from public view made a huge impression. We often role played it in the garden dressing up, making crowns of velvet and jewellery. A week after, my father decided to drive to London to see the decorations. Motor bike and sidecar for a family of 4 was the mode of transport, driven through the night. God bless my Dad for wonderful memories."

~ Pam ~

"I was 2, living in London when Uncle Bill arrived from New York and went mad decorating every available surface of our Georgian house with flags and bunting. From our first floor balcony we watched all the soldiers gun carriages police on their way from barracks, Met the police horse stables from very early in the morning on their way to the mustering in Westminster. We were very excited by the time we dressed in a Prince of Wales black and white dogtooth check coat with a velvet collar, our Sunday best. Our lovely uncle had arrived with a huge fridge from Selfridges."

~ Morag ~

"We lived on a fruit farm in Kent, a Union Jack flew from the front of the farmhouse and on the big day we watched the ceremonies on the small screen TV."

~ Paul ~

My thanks to the residents who contributed their memories. What a great piece of oral history.

Not only is it the Platinum Jubilee for the Queen - for 70 years. It is also the case that Sonning Common parish is 70 years old and held its first meeting in April 1952.

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

Gadgeteers is the theme of the Reading Agency's Summer Reading Challenge 2022 for children. Launched in mid-July, and there will be special story and craft sessions (and cake sales!) starting at 10am every Saturday morning in August.



CREATURE ENCOUNTERS OF THE CLOSE KIND

Throughout the year, The Friends of Sonning Common Library organise and subsidise various events for both adults and children.

One of the most popular junior activities is ZooLab, who send a ranger to the library with a whole host of animals for the audience to interact with. As the creatures are carefully passed around,

the ranger spins a story about them and throws in a few fun facts. The tales are told with real enthusiasm, and participants are encouraged to share their reactions to seeing and feeling the critters. Six year old Thomas Ashley was one of the twenty five youngsters present at their last visit to the library. His grandmother, Jill Hutchinson, was amazed that some two months later,

when he next saw a corn snake and an African land snail, he was able to identify both immediately.

ZooLab is due to visit the library again on Wednesday 27 July at 11am. Tickets cost £5 and are available from the library in Grove Road in advance only. ●

COULD YOU SURVIVE THE CRETACEOUS PERIOD (OR A TRIP TO THE LIBRARY)?

In some people's minds, libraries are intrinsically associated with school. And, for some, school is linked to toiling over boring books. Perhaps that's why a trip to the library is not always a popular choice of outings.

In reality, the library is a fun place to go. For small children there's Storytime on Saturday mornings which is often accompanied by art and craft activities and a cake sale. Rhyme Time takes place every other Monday. In the summer holidays the team from ZooLab will be re-visiting bringing with them a selection of small creatures for the audience to handle and learn about. This is more suitable for slightly older children and not for the faint-hearted! Lego Master Builders will also be returning to the library in August for more creative building shenanigans.

All this aside, there is no denying the library is full of books. About half of the space is dedicated to children, with everything from board books for babies to novels suitable for teen plus readers.

Don't let your child tell you they don't like

books. If they are interested in anything at all then there is one somewhere which they will love. If you've just got a new pet, why not borrow a book about how to care for it? There are plenty in the children's non-fiction section. There are also books on Harry Potter themed baking, Star Wars and Pokemon. There is a series of Marvel Black Panther books or if football is their passion, take a look at the stories about that or the football biographies. If history is more their thing perhaps they would like the "My Story" books which are written from the perspective of young people and are an exciting way to explore history?

Not all books are word-heavy. There is a selection of graphic novels aimed at children and also audio books. If your child is a library member they can download comics and magazines for free onto their devices including HorseWyse and Minimag. Alternatively, the Usborne Puzzle Adventures break up reading time by setting puzzles to be solved.

Rainbow Magic and Beast Quest books are very popular and once those are finished there are also Sea Quest books.

Talking of quests, the "You Choose" books allow the reader to literally choose what action to take. "Could you Survive The Cretaceous Period?" has 33 choices and 17 endings - a fascinating adventure!

It goes without saying that the library is also well stocked with Enid Blyton and David Walliams. Older readers can enjoy Anthony Horowitz or Richard Adams, Meg Cabot or the Shadow & Bone series. Or why not try an Agatha Christie? I could go on and on because there are so many books to choose from. Best of all, there is no charge for ordering a title from another library for a child so whatever your son or daughter fancies reading, you can get it for them - for free! If they decide they don't like it, no problem, it hasn't cost you a penny. Pop into the library and pick up another!

Personally, now I've spotted them, I shall be reading the Classics Abridged For Children. It's an ideal way for a quizzier like me to learn about the plots and characters without spending the time reading the originals. Shush, don't tell anyone! ●

Alison Smith
Chair of FoSCL



HOLIDAY PLANS FOR THE LIBRARY

Please note that the library will be closed on 2 and 3 June (Jubilee Bank Holidays) – but open on Saturday 4 June, with a storytime at 10am as usual.

We have Rhymetimes for the under-3s on the first and third Mondays of the month at 11 – 11.30am, run by volunteers. If you miss singing rhymes to your children/grandchildren, why not volunteer to do it at the library? (Ask the library manager for more information)

Also for children, we have storytimes every Saturday morning at 10am. Our

next special storytime will be on 18 June, to celebrate Fathers' Day on 19th. There will be a craft session after the storytime, aimed at 3 – 8 year olds, and home-made cakes will be on sale (Please bring cash!)

The Friends of the Library group (FoSCL) hope to have a stall at the school summer fair (also on 18 June) to raise money for new books for the library. Please come and support them!

Gadgeteers is the theme of the Reading Agency's Summer Reading Challenge 2022 for children. It will be launched in mid-July, and there will be special story

and craft sessions (and cake sales!) starting at 10am every Saturday morning in August.

For more details of these, or any other activities please contact the library by phone 972 2448 or email sonningcommon.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Or just come in and ask! ●

Rosemary Dunstan

TOM FORT CHINESE

For the past few months I have been *Knocking on the Door of Life*. I have been *a Moon over Water*. I have been *a Dragon, Stretching and Coiling*. I have been *a Bear and a Tiger*. I have been *a Fountain and a Waterfall*.

Don't worry, I haven't entirely lost what marbles remain to me. But I have discovered the ancient Chinese preventative discipline of Qi Gong.

If anyone had said to me six months ago that I would soon be spending 25 minutes each morning doing Qi Gong exercises I would have made a loud scoffing noise and told them that such nonsense might suit the Chinese but not this Englishman. Which just goes to show that we could all do with being a bit more broad-minded.

The thing is that for some time I have had a few deeply boring issues to do with balance and mobility that impacted on my quality of life. It was suggested to me that I might try Qi Gong. Never heard of it, I said. It was explained to me that it was allied to Tai Chi, which I had heard about because my sister has done it for forty years and swears by it.

Qi Gong is less arduous than Tai Chi, which is good for me, and easier to remember, also good. Anyone who can stand up can do it (I actually position myself near a wall because of the tottering problem). It is all about flow, easy, undemanding movements combined with slow breathing. The idea is to clear the mind and get the Qi – the life-force energy – moving through the body.

The big question: does it do any good? Being preventative makes it hard to be specific about the effects – how can you tell what you might have got if you hadn't done it? All I can say is that I believe it has been beneficial to both my physical and mental health.

I do a weekly class in Henley on a Tuesday morning – if any reader of the magazine is interested in investigating, either email me at tomfort3@gmail.com or contact my teacher Steve on 07770 945416.

Get the Qi flowing! ●



MUSHROOMS, THE NEXT BIG SUPERFOOD?

Cheap, widely available, versatile, nutritious, low in fat and great for the planet. Mushrooms are easy to include in your diet, good for your health and good for our planet.

Mushrooms are packed with goodness from minerals to vitamins. They contain 302mg of potassium, 32 mcg of folate (vitamin B9), other vitamin Bs and 8mcg of vitamin D2 per 80g. They also contain active polysaccharides, a type of soluble fibre called beta-glucan which can help activate part of your immune system and an antioxidant called selenium which also helps support the immune system. They also contain prebiotics and may help maintain heart health and help prevent neurodegenerative conditions.

(For more information go to <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/health-benefits-mushrooms>)

Mushrooms are very easy to fit into your diet, from Mushroom burgers, Mushroom risotto and Mushroom on pizzas to Mushroom in a full english breakfast, in

bolognese and in jacket potatoes. It is one of those foods which can easily slide into most meals. Mushrooms can replace meat, be used as a veg or just be added nutrients without adding fat and sugar, mushroom can do it all.

Adding mushrooms to your diet isn't expensive, plus they aren't hard to find. For example mushrooms can be bought in virtually all shops, for instance Tesco or the Co-op or can be bought in farmer's markets such as Henley square market. Furthermore, mushrooms are relatively inexpensive. If you replace part of your mince in a bolognese with mushroom, you could buy 650g of white button mushrooms for £1.60 (450g of mince is £3) at the Co-op.

And to top it off, mushrooms are far better for the environment than most foods. Mushrooms are often grown on upcycled waste products such as husks, straw and manure. They also use minimal water. According to South Mill Mushrooms, it takes less than 9 litres of water to grow 450g of mushrooms. Compare this to 45

litres it takes to grow most fruit and veg, this is clearly very good. Farming them also causes the emitants of less carbon dioxide and requires far less land. One square foot of mushrooms can produce 3.2kg of mushrooms, plus they are often stacked vertically in growing facilities.

Overall, they require less growing material, less space, water and land while reducing the amounts of carbon dioxide.

In summary mushrooms are cheap, widely available, versatile, nutritious, low in fat and great for the planet. ●

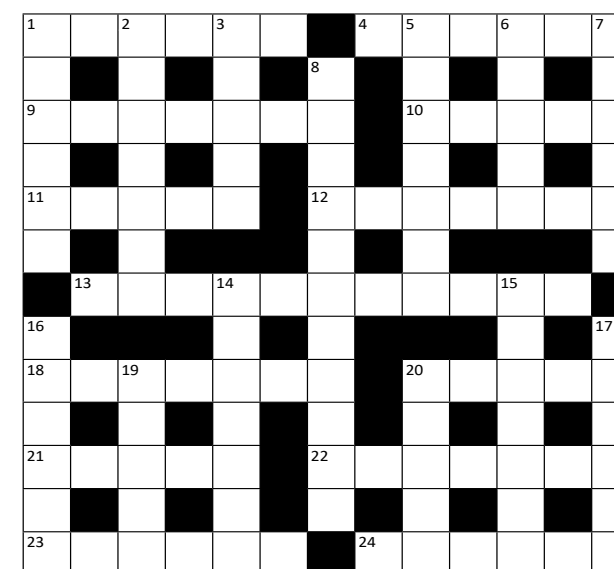
Gabriel Andlauer-Turner



PUZZLE PAGE

By **DAVID DUNSTAN**

Cryptic crossword



ACROSS

- Helen is confused with unknown local town (6)
- Sailor has an account with American calculator (6)
- British and Italian have nothing for Mexican outlaw (7)
- Hastened cedar's downfall (5)
- Clumsy – in record time (5)
- Mixed salads include new footwear (7)
- 13&18. Wandering herd proliferated around very quiet village (11,7)
- Tribe scattered by dangerous dog (5)
- Cope badly with hydrogen for a period of time (5)
- 22&24. Transgressing, replacing iodine with oxygen, widespread in the village (7,6)
- Farm animal for Germany in the city (6)
- See 22.

DOWN

- Shire inhabitant has a small quantity on top of cooker (6)
- No-one is disturbed around Zambia, including queen – it's not nothing! (7)
- Proclamation is cited incorrectly (5)
- Ancient city covered in cake before girl in African country (7)
- Firms with a bedtime drink (5)
- Cruelty or unhappiness? (6)
- Sounds rough: salad vegetable served with roast beef (11)
- Girl found on the moors (7)
- Metal ignited with uranium in him (7)
- Rate old instrument in the car (7)
- Distressed Angora in a region in Spain (6)
- An experiment in steep roof safety (5)
- Prohibit Joanna as a musical instrument (5)

Sudoku

Grading: medium

6		5		2				
				9				1
		2	7				6	
	2	9	6	3	1		7	
			8		2			
	3		5	7	9	1	2	
	1				8	6		
8				6				
				1		5		3

Cryptogram

The following quotation has been encoded using a simple letter substitution. What does it say?

PESDT RA YPN EBN PESDT RA SOIP LEMPI

E LEB KPEDRKT, HPEDRKT, EBN HOIP.

– YPBWELOB JSEBMDOB

Quiz: English history

- What is the Roman wall running across the north of England?
- When did the Normans invade England?
- In what year was the Magna Carta signed?
- What killed nearly a third of the population in 1348?
- Which royal houses clashed in the Wars of the Roses?
- Which king established the Church of England?
- In what year was the Gunpowder Plot discovered?
- In what year was the Great Fire of London?
- What pair of monarchs reigned after the Glorious Revolution of 1688?
- Which monarch holds the record for the longest reign in English history?

See answers on page 34

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DID YOU KNOW?

citizens
advice

BASIC GUIDELINES FOR HOSTING UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

If you are one of those who have generously offered to host Ukrainian refugees, you need to know what is involved.

The government hasn't yet released complete details of how the "Homes for Ukraine" scheme will work, but as of the time of writing (mid-April 2022) the following guidelines apply:

First, you can volunteer for someone from the Ukraine to come to the UK and live with you. If you know of specific Ukrainians whom you wish to host, those people can apply to come to the UK. If you don't know of any particular people you want to host, you can sign up to be matched with one or more people. In

either case, your local council will pay £350 per month per sponsor or property.

You must be able to provide the right kind of accommodation: it can be a spare room or an empty property, but it must be safe, suitable and large enough. The local council will visit you to make sure that the living space is appropriate. In addition, safety checks will be carried out on both hosts and guests, including police and criminal records checks.

Before you apply for the scheme, do check with your mortgage provider and/or your home insurance company, if applicable, to ensure that they have no objections.

You must be willing to let the refugee(s) stay with you, or in your separate accommodation, for at least six months - the longer the better. You may not charge them rent. Your guests will have the right to work and study, claim benefits, use the NHS, go to school and attend free English classes.

Citizens Advice can help with claims for benefits and other necessities. Our website at www.citizensadvice.org.uk has relevant information which is constantly updated as new rules are publicized. You can also telephone the Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale Adviceline on 0808 278 7907. ●

LONG COVID



In March the Office for National Statistics reported that approximately 1.7 million people in the UK were experiencing self-reported long Covid. Over half of these had symptoms such as fatigue, loss of sense of smell and inability to breathe, for at least a year. This can have a far-reaching impact.

In the short term, if you are employed and ill, sick pay may be available and there is information about this on our website www.citizensadvice.org.uk if you think you are not receiving the

correct amount. If your income has dropped, an online benefit calculator will show whether you may be entitled to additional financial help, such as Universal Credit, Council Tax Reduction and Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Details of how to claim benefits, including contact numbers, are on our website. An unexpected drop in income means that debts can quickly mount up and it is better to take action to manage the situation sooner rather than later. You can talk to an adviser on our Debt Helpline: 0800 240 4420. There is also a link to webchat in the debt section of our website.

If you are being dismissed from work due to long-term illness, there is also advice about this on our website, or you can speak to an adviser by phoning Adviceline: 0808 278 7907.

There is ongoing research into long Covid as so much is still unknown, and new groups are forming to provide information and mutual support. ●

£150 'REBATE' TO HELP WITH ENERGY BILLS

Most households in council tax bands A-D will be receiving a £150 government 'rebate' to help with rising energy bills.

SODC currently working hard to arrange your £150 payments - here's how we'll do this:

- **households that pay their council tax by direct debit** - should receive the £150 directly into their bank account. We hope to make these payments by the end of the month.
- **households that aren't on our direct debit scheme** - will receive theirs once they have confirmed their bank details with us, which will take longer as we need to write to them to do this.

You can get your £150 payment sooner if you sign up to pay by Direct Debit now, head to our council tax webpage.

You can keep up to date on how we're doing on the payments via our website. We'd ask you to please refrain from contacting us to chase the 'rebate' payment as this will help us ensure everyone eligible receives their payments more quickly. Thank you for your understanding. ●

EIGHTY YEARS PLUS AND ALL THAT – CLIFF PRYKE

By DIANA PEARMAN



Cliff Pryke died in the night on Friday 15 April at home. He had been enjoying the FISH tea Party only a few days before. Cliff has always been a great supporter of the magazine and since 2015 he has written five articles about his memories of life in this village that he loved. This would have been his fifth and I collected his latest written piece at the beginning of April.

This obituary will be a selection of his written memories.

Cliff was born in Gallowstree Common, moved to Emmer Green and then Sonning Common, where he spent the rest of his life. His earliest memory was his first day at school, quite scary for a five year old, but he survived. Early school took place in the Congregational Hall, where Sonning

Common village hall now stands. The secondary school was in Grove Road where he stayed until he was 15 and left to earn a living. Cliff's dad was a builder, so Cliff did a 5-year apprenticeship with him.

During WW2 his dad was posted to North Africa and then Italy. The village received quite a few evacuees, two came to stay with Cliff's family and there were a number billeted in 'Maitlands' the big house opposite the end of Woodlands Road. There were Americans based on Kingwood Common who were always in the village and if Cliff met any he would say, 'got any gum chum', invariably they would oblige. There was also a massive tip on Reade's Lane which was good for rummaging and 'finding' things not available in Britain. One night a bomb dropped on the village, landing in a field where Old Copse gardens is now. There were not any casualties just shattered glass and Cliff with his friends, gathered round the crater, but nothing to see just a big crater.

As a young man Cliff's entertainment was centred on Reading's Palace Theatre where he enjoyed band music such as Johnny Dankworth and Ronnie Scott. He enjoyed music throughout his life, singing in the All Saints Church choir, later as a member of Nottakwire and very recently in the Harmony group at Peppard Memorial Hall. Here at every opportunity he would break in

to Gilbert and Sullivan's 'The Policeman's Lot is not a happy one' or 'Mud, glorious mud' by Flanders and Swann.

In the early 1960's he ran the village Youth Club and provided a range of activities, Rock and Roll dances, sport, films and speakers. The most famous of which was Sir John Hunt, the first man to climb Mount Everest. The Youth Club even dressed a float for Henley Gala days.

Edwina Lamond said "He arranged many fun outings and was a great leader of the Youth Club".

There are many residents of Sonning Common who remember these fun days of their youth.

Cliff's opinion was that the 1950's were the start of things to come, probably for the good. Many of the fields he used to play in now had houses on them which he called progress, "as there is still a magnificent countryside surrounding us". He always appreciated the facilities in the village but they get better and better "a fantastic health centre and every shop you need without leaving the village" his words.

When Cliff wrote his memories for the magazine he always hoped other residents would do likewise and share them with other people via the magazine! It would be a fitting tribute to him. Please email editor or just write it (Cliff did). ●

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

Do you want to hear a story of everyday country folk – but especially of those who want to sing?

Harmony was formed in August 2021 and we already have 73 committed singers from the local community surrounding Peppard and Sonning Common. We meet every Thursday at the Peppard War Memorial Hall. We are mostly golden oldies with ages ranging 50-96 years but we are definitely in denial of anno domini. Throw

away your sticks and crutches and just sing; our motto is 'have fun, enjoy and go home happy'.

Our smartest move was to recruit Anne Fairbrother, our professional Musical Director who is leading us along a golden pathway to "opportunity knocks." Who knows – Peppard this year, in 2023 we could be a backing-group for Adele in Las Vegas? What is life without ambition? We are currently taking bookings for Christmas,

the Queen's Jubilee, Weddings, Bar mitzvahs, and general busking! Buddy, can you spare a penny please?

If you want to join Harmony and come to our next free party ring Barry Wood on 01491 629982 and see how "we have fun, enjoyment and go home happy".

The full version of this very amusing story can be found on the magazine facebook page and website. ●

A RUNNER'S TAIL (N.B. LIKE THE TAIL OF A RAT RATHER THAN THE TALE)

Every runner has a goal. This may be to become a "local legend" on Strava for running the most times around Millennium Green or to raise money for a favourite charity by undertaking a 10k or a gruelling marathon. This year, my goal was to run a half marathon personal best (PB) - something that has eluded me for the last two years but has been annoyingly within my grasp. With this in mind, training for the Reading Half Marathon started in earnest early in the New Year and everything was going to plan with no injuries and lots of practice runs completed.

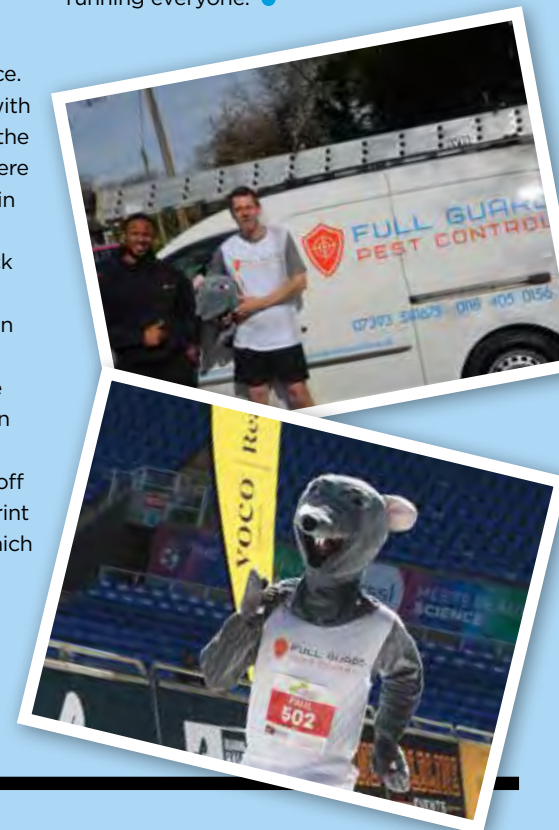
However, two weeks before the race the following post popped up on the Next door app "is anyone running the Reading Half Marathon and willing to wear a rat outfit in exchange for £500 for their favourite charity?". I'm always interested in raising money for the charity CALM (<https://www.thecalzone.net/>) so contacted the local company posting the message - FULL GUARD PEST CONTROL. Michael and Leah, who run the company, had come up with the idea as a way of advertising their business to the local community and also wanted to give a generous donation to a good cause. I was initially dubious as the recent warm weather would make running in a full rat outfit difficult - but

when Michael said he would increase the donation to £1000 - I couldn't say no.

Race day arrived with next to no practice of running in the outfit - thankfully it was a fairly cool day. After a quick interview with Rita from BBC Radio Berkshire at the start line, I set off - only 13.1 miles to go! Fellow runners were very supportive and kept me going with many kind words as they overtook me and headed into the distance. The children in the crowd were brilliant with lots of shouts of "Go on Ratty!" and "It's the Highway Rat!". Comments from adults were very funny but too rude to be published in this magazine. Taking on water was a bit of a problem but I did force myself to pick up a free beer at the Nags Head just off the Oxford Road. With the SCL stadium in sight my pace got slower and slower as I started to overheat so it was great to see Michael at mile 12 who encouraged me on to the finish. I was pleased that I had not stopped running and hadn't had to take off the head during the race. As always a sprint finish across the line had to be done - which literally finished me off.

It was my worst half marathon time ever (2 hours 6 minutes) but raised £1200 for CALM and was a lot of fun to do. Many thanks to Michael and Leah of FULL

GUARD PEST CONTROL (<https://www.fullguardpestcontrol.co.uk>) for their generous donation and all the other people who supported me along the way via <https://justgiving.com/fundraising/paul-hodges8>. The PB will have to wait until the Bracknell Half Marathon in May - happy running everyone. ●



PHIL SWIMS 4 MIND

By CHRISTINE ATKINSON

Phil Warren - who is our daughter's best friend's dad - has taken on a fundraising challenge to swim 4 times across the Bristol Channel - which is huge! - for a charity called MIND who support people suffering with their mental health. Training is well under way, including a 6 hour swim in lakes at the beginning of May.

The schedule is tough :

June 8 — From Penarth to Weston-Super-Mare.

July 7 — From Penarth to Clevedon.

August 20 — From Glenthorne to Porthcawl.

September 17 — From Ilfracombe to the Gower, near Swansea.

The swims will range in length from eight nautical miles to 24 but will actually total about 100 miles due to the varying tide.

We will be following his progress in the next issue.

You can follow his progress on facebook - PhilSwims4Mind.

Please give a little if you can <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/philswims4mind> ●



Church news



SPRINGWATER

What a great time of year, in spite of all the terrible things that are going on in the world, the regeneration of the flowers and the trees remind us of the beauty of God's creation, added to by the joy of seeing the increasing number of children coming to church.

At Springwater we are enjoying the Spring Cafe and being able to eat and drink in the garden again. The Steering Wheel Fellowship continue to meet regularly, the Ark baby and toddler group, Aspire the women's group, Compassionate Loaf for all who love to bake and chat and most importantly the Community Food Bank, are all doing well.

We have recently started a weekly course on the Bible, which has been both interesting and enlightening, producing much discussion and answering many questions.

We look forward to welcoming you on a Sunday morning at 10.30 and maybe having a chat over coffee afterwards.

God bless you.

Chris Girdler

www.springwaterchurch.org.uk
Tel: 01189724519

PARISHIONERS WALK AGAINST HUNGER

On Saturday 9 April, parishioners and friends of St Michael's Church, Sonning Common walked in support of CAFOD's project to eliminate hunger and malnutrition across the world. The charity, Catholic Aid for Overseas Development, set the challenge to walk 200km during the 6 weeks of Lent.

St Michael's put together a team of more than 20, with each person walking 10km to exceed the 200km target. The group, aged from 1 year old to 80, enjoyed the local countryside in beautiful weather on a circular route organised by Peter Lewis and Stephen Fox.

On their return to the church, an outdoor tea with delicious homemade cakes by Krissie Stitt was a welcome treat.

At the time of writing over £550 has been raised. If you would like to contribute to the fundraising, please visit:

<https://walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-michaels-walk-against-hunger-2022>

ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

It was wonderful to celebrate our Easter liturgies in full this year, having had no

services for two years, and restricted services last year. There was a tangible sense of joy and appreciation that the parish community was able to come together to celebrate the most important dates in the Christian calendar. It was wonderful to join with the other local church communities for the Walk of Witness around Sonning Common on a glorious Good Friday.

The first Catholic church in Sonning Common was erected in 1947 so 2022 is the 75th anniversary of that event. On the 1st May we will begin celebrating this anniversary with a number of events. Amongst them is a parish open day on Saturday 9th July, put the date in your diary. You might have driven or walked past St Michael's on the Peppard Road many times and wondered what it was like inside or what happens there. This is your opportunity to find out by having a tour of the church, enjoy some refreshments and meet some of the parishioners. Check our website for exact timings nearer the day.

Continuing a brief history from the last issue:

The first Mass was celebrated in the temporary building on 30 November 1947. The sanctuary where the altar stood could be screened off by a curtain to enable the rest of the building to be used

for social functions. During winter it was heated by four small coal burning stoves. Parishioners used the ground where the present hall stands to grow vegetables.

In 1955 the decision was made to create a separate parish taking in Sonning Common and the surrounding villages and countryside. Close to the site of the church was a grocer's shop with a garden. This was purchased by the parish of Our Lady and St Anne in Caversham and given to the new parish as its presbytery. Fr Bill Ford was appointed the first parish priest in August that year. An aim of the parish was to construct a hall that could be used while the temporary building was removed and a permanent church built. Money was very tight so many fund-raising activities were held. Very popular was the twice yearly 'Catholic Jumble' that could raise around £300 a time in the 1950's! Building of the hall took place in 1962 and parish activities transferred to the new building which was heated by electricity rather than coal burners.

Construction of the new church commenced in 1963 but more about that in the next issue.

You don't need to wait for our parish open day to step across the threshold. You are always very welcome. If want to know what is going on check the weekly newsletter on our website: www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk

Brian Theobald

CHILTERN EVANGELICAL CHURCH

We're people from diverse backgrounds, with one thing in common: Jesus. We're amazed at his love. And we know our need for his forgiveness and healing in our lives. We want to live out his teaching and extend his love to the village of Sonning Common.

No matter what your story, come and experience Christian community with us. You won't be made to feel awkward or find yourself volunteered for things. We

welcome people from all walks of life to our Sunday Service at 4.30pm

Keen to read the Bible? Scan this QR code to access the Bible in over 90 languages. Why not start with Mark's account of the life of Jesus? Many people have questions about Christianity, so we run Christianity Explored courses. If you would like to know more, contact us via our website.



Christianity is about relationship. It is about knowing and following Jesus and finding our greatest hope in him. It can't be reduced to a set of rules, and it can't be tied down to any one culture. It's hard to sum up Christianity in a few words because it's impossible to do justice to Jesus in a few words!

Why not start your journey of discovery today?

Susan Judge

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BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Since 2013 the Berkshire Archaeological Society has been working on the site of Johnson Matthey.

We surveyed the site lawn area in 2013 and found a network of anomalies which indicate past structures below ground level.

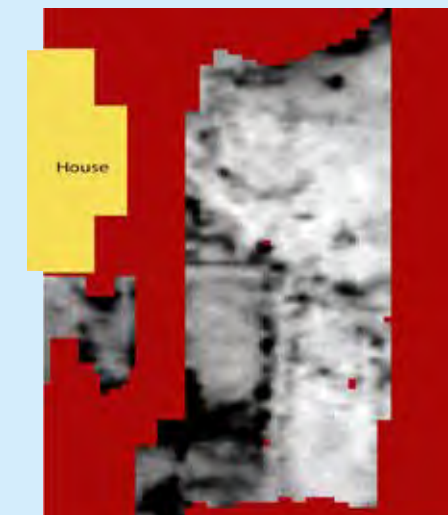
We have been excavating trenches within the grounds every year to try and piece together the anomalies shown up on the survey. These features show some indication of probable buildings or structures displayed on the geophysics survey in 2013, relating

to the historical development of possible buildings or structures within this area.

Over the coming issues of this newsletter we will be showing details of a Roman wall, 16th-17th century buildings, a Georgian wall and garden and a Victorian gateway into this garden.

If you would like more information about the Berkshire Archaeological Society's fieldwork at Blounts Court send an email to projects@berksarch.co.uk

Nigel Spencer
Berkshire Archaeological Society



Plan of the Geophysics Survey at Blounts Court 2013

VILLAGE QUIZ 2022, HAS BEEN MISSED

Many thanks to everyone who took part in this year's Village Quiz. It was great to be back! It was a very close run competition ending in a tie which was resolved by this tie break question - Who is Barbara Millicent Roberts better known as? (answer below). One extra point went to the team that knew the answer.

1st Two Hoots 109 points
2nd Mongooses 108 points

3rd Fortress 101 points
4th B.Gs 100 points
5th The Book Group 99 points
6th On The Tiles 98 points

Closely followed by: Green's Gremlins, Comets, Wishful Thinkers, Short Circuit, Between The Covers, Chiltern Evangelical Church (CEC), Let's Get Quizzical, Antipenultimates and The Jammy Dodgers.

Two Hoots (Leigh Rawlins, Sue Rawlins,

Alison Smith, Jeremy Smith and Katherine Lamprell took home the trophy and a 'quizzing winner' gnome each.

By supporting the quiz, the bar and the raffle, over £450 was raised for school funds. Already looking forward to the next quiz! ●

Mel White

Answer: Barbara Millicent Roberts is better known as Barbie

PUZZLE PAGE ANSWERS FROM PAGE 25

Quiz: English history

1. Hadrian's Wall 2. 1066 3. 1215 4. The Black Death 5. Lancaster and York 6. Henry VIII 7. 1605 8. 1666 9. William and Mary 10. Elizabeth II (reached 70 years on 6 February 2022; Victoria reigned for 63 years)

Cryptogram

EARLY TO BED AND EARLY TO RISE MAKES
A MAN HEALTHY, WEALTHY, AND WISE.
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

9	7	6	2	1	4	5	8	3
8	5	3	9	6	7	4	1	2
2	1	4	3	5	8	6	9	7
4	3	8	5	7	9	1	2	6
7	6	1	8	4	2	9	3	5
5	2	6	9	3	1	8	7	4
1	4	2	7	8	5	3	6	9
3	8	7	4	9	6	2	5	1
6	9	5	1	2	3	7	4	8

Sudoku

N	O	M	M	O	C		D	R	O	F	X	O
O		U		J	H		E		O			D
G	N	I	N	N	O	S		H	C	O		E
A		H		A		I		T		R		E
R		E		B	I	T		R	A	P	P	E
A		I				A		E				S
	D			E	F	I	E	R	H	T	R	O
M			D				E		R			T
I	S		A	N	D	A	L	S		I	N	E
		O		U		R		C	Z		B	
D			R	A	C	E	D		B	A	N	D
A		O		U		H		D	O		O	
S			A	B	A	C	U	S		H	E	N

Cryptic crossword

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Compass Water Softeners	14	Mike Farina Auto Services Ltd	Back	The Mobile Hairdresser	14
Curtains, Blinds, Pelmet	31	Milo Technical Support (Computer Problems)	35	Time 4 Pilates	9
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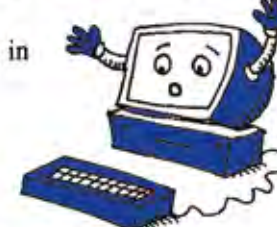
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